

### FOOTBALL.

The fatalities which occur each year in connection with this popular game cause widespread alarm and call forth positive censure from many sources. This year is no exception to the rule. Two weeks playing made a record of seven deaths besides many cases of serious injury, and the end is not yet for Thanksgiving Day's record is not yet made up. Thanksgiving Day! What would the Puritan fathers think of our use of their day of grateful devotion and happy domestic fellowship?

We are told that strenuous athletics, such as is furnished by football, is conducive to manliness. To this we may assent, provided the game is conducted within manly limitations, but the ruthless hazard of human life is not manly. It is brutal if not cowardly. The truly brave are those who place themselves between danger and the security of human life and happiness. Many of our fathers in the sixties exposed their lives to danger, but to the end that the lives and liberties and domestic felicity of those in their homes might be preserved. The soldier who wantonly exposed his life, or the life of his comrades to peril, was condemned. It never has been true and never can be that brutality is promotive of either physical or moral manliness. The bully may overawe, but in methods that appeal to honorable manhood, he is a weakling. It is not recorded that either Jackson or Lee was a master of brute force.

Recently some college authorities have expressed the opinion that the element of danger intensifies interest in the game and is essential to its success. This might be said also of Spanish bull-fighting and of American prize-fighting, but it does not justify either. There are many games that are intensely interesting that do not involve the element of danger. The meaning of such statements is that the crowds of spectators are interested in seeing men wounded or killed.

But we are told there is risk in all pursuits and danger everywhere. The answer is that the better judgment of society protests against the wanton exposure of life, and civil laws take cognizance of such exposure. Are we to trifle with the mighty and sacred instinct of parental affection simply that we may attract a crowd by exposing young men to death as beasts in the arena? There are devoted parents in our land today whose happiness is blighted for life as they mourn for the pride and joy of their hearts, who has fallen a victim to "the element of danger" in the desperate contest.

There are features of the game other than that of imperiling human life that should be eliminated. Reporters commonly speak of the game as a fight and describe how the contestants fought. Intense anger is excited and the hostile methods of an enemy in furious combat are used, limited only by rules of the game whose violation would mean defeat and involve a penalty. Is it possible to apply the golden rule in such a contest, or is it applied under such desperate conditions? "In honor preferring one another" is Paul's standard of receiving and bestowing honors. We will let the professor of ethics in the university explain how this principle is illustrated in the football contest.

We are in favor of the game. It can be made inter-

esting, civil and safe. Our boys should have recreation, should be trained in skill and muscular strength. Friendly contests, in which the most competent shall be rewarded, are to be encouraged. But many good and commendable things degenerate merely from excess. There is often but a step between dignity and dishonor, a wholesome rivalry may be perverted into a desperate antagonism which involves a maximum of risk to both contestants. The true philosopher as well as the manly athlete is he who clearly discriminates between the two.

E. B. M.

### PROGRESS.

Very appropriately the first page of "The Home Mission Herald" is devoted to "Thanksgiving Thoughts." These thoughts deal with the progress and state of the Southern Presbyterian Church during the past year. The facts that appear in this statement are most interesting and encouraging, and the editors of the Herald have done valuable service in presenting them to our people. The facts and figures presented indicate a year of unusual prosperity. More than thirty thousand additions were made to our church membership, sixteen thousand of these having been received on profession of faith. The year's work shows a net increase of four per cent in membership, which is equal to the highest attained by any denomination.

In the department of benevolence, the Church this year made the largest contribution in its history. The total contributed for Foreign Missions was \$412,000; for the Assembly's Home Missions, \$91,000, and for Local Home Missions, \$205,000. This gives a total for Foreign and Home Missions of \$708,000. We are told that five years ago the amount given for these causes was only \$404,000. The amount contributed to all departments of Church work this year was \$3,604,906.

It is noteworthy that the largest relative increase of membership was in our mission fields. The largest percentage of accessions was in those synods which are aided by the Assembly's funds. Oklahoma gained 22 per cent; Texas, 16 per cent; Florida and Arkansas, 13.5 per cent. It is noted that one small Presbytery in Oklahoma has grown in a few years into a vigorous Synod and Texas is now the third Synod in size in the Assembly.

Such facts call for profound gratitude and inspire larger hopes and more earnest endeavor.

Recently published statistics on Sabbath-schools indicate that there are in the world a grand total of 252,972 schools with 25,961,291 teachers and scholars. These schools are distributed as follows: In Great Britain and Ireland 46,399, with 8,134,716 members. In the other European nations there are 27,698 with 1,997,900 members. In Asia and Africa are 6,124 schools and 263,978 members. In the United States are 151,476 schools with 13,732,190 members. In Canada 9,703 schools have 791,000 members. In North American regions are 1,850 schools containing 165,000 members. In South America there are 3,500 schools and 153,000 members. In Oceanica are 9,372 schools and 723,360 members.